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PCBs Releases to the Environment

When a release of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) to the environment occurs, two reports must be made:

- a verbal notification under the *Release and Environmental Emergency Notification Regulations* and the *Canadian Environment Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA 1999) and;
- a written report under the *PCB Regulations*.

Release and Environmental Emergency Notification Regulations

The *Release and Environmental Emergency Notification Regulations* (the Notification Regulations) came into force on March 25, 2011. The purpose of the Notification Regulations is to designate a single organization for each province and territory to which notification shall be made in the event of an environmental emergency or of a release in contravention of one of several Regulations under CEPA 1999, including but not limited to the *PCB Regulations*. This also serves to reduce the notification burden and duplication of effort by providing the regulated community and the public with the name and telephone number of the 24-hour authorities for each province or territory to which notifications are to be made, enabling these authorities to receive notification on behalf of Environment Canada (see Table 1).

The *PCB Regulations*

The *PCB Regulations* (SOR/2008-73) came into force on September 5, 2008. The purpose of the *PCB Regulations* is to protect Canada's environment and the health of Canadians by minimizing the risk posed by the use, storage and release to the environment of PCBs and by accelerating the elimination of these substances.

What is a release to the environment?

Releasing PCBs to the environment above certain prescribed quantities is prohibited. This applies to all PCBs, without exception and at all times, including during the conduct of activities permitted by the *PCB Regulations*. Under CEPA, "release" is defined as: discharge, spray, inject, inoculate, abandon, deposit, spill, leak, seep, pour, emit, empty, throw, dump, place and exhaust.

The *PCB Regulations* define a release of PCBs into the environment as any of the following:

- More than one gram of PCBs from equipment in use; or
- A liquid containing PCBs in a concentration of 2mg/kg or more not in use; or
- A solid containing PCBs in a concentration of 50mg/kg or more not in use.

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What is the procedure for notification?

Release to the environment that may contain PCBs



Provide verbal notification to appropriate provincial/territorial contacts as soon as possible under the *Release and Environmental Emergency Notification Regulations* and the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (see Table 1)



Test the release to determine its PCB concentration and the total spill amount



Total amount of PCBs released from equipment in use is more than 1 gram

Release of PCBs not in use (e.g. stored) at a concentration of 2 mg/kg or more for liquids or 50 mg/kg or more for solids

No PCBs released or less than 2 mg/kg for liquids or less than 50 mg/kg for solids or 1 g. or less for equipment in use



Written report required under *PCB Regulations*. Report to be submitted to Environment Canada Regional Director of Enforcement using the PCB Online Reporting System (PCBRS) whenever possible, or alternatively in writing.

<https://srbpc-pcbars.ec.gc.ca/Connexion-Login.aspx>

Written report not required

When is notification required?

Under the notification requirements, persons are required to provide notification of a release of a substance, the likelihood of such a release, or the occurrence of an environmental emergency, as soon as possible in the circumstances.

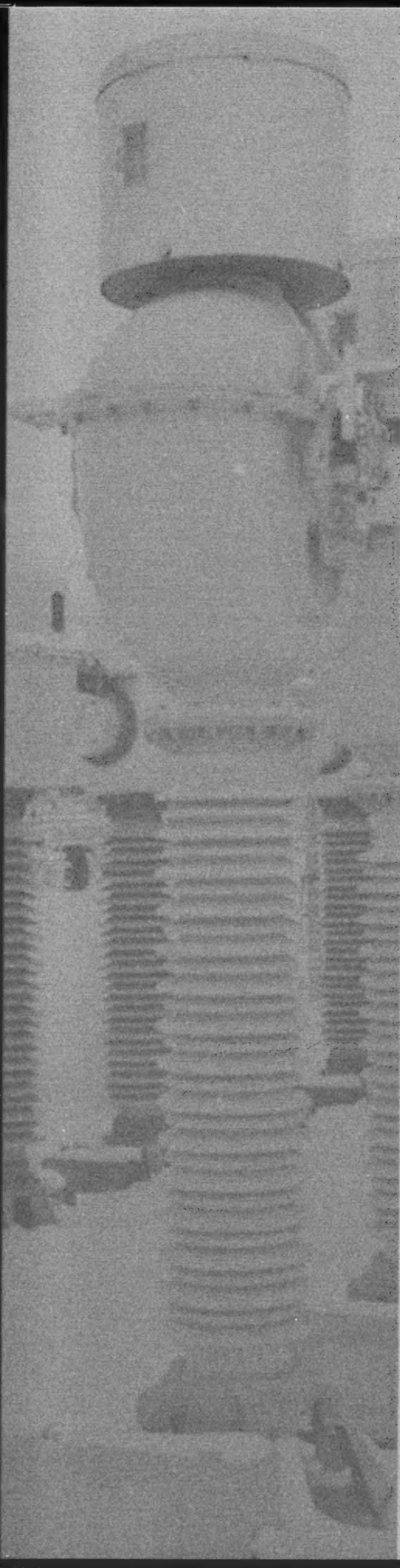
Table 1 Provincial and Territorial contacts for Verbal Notification under the *Release and Environmental Emergency Notification Regulations*

Province	Office	Telephone Number
Newfoundland and Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador Regional Office Canadian Coast Guard Fisheries and Oceans Canada	709-772-2083 or 1-800-563-9089*
Prince Edward Island	Maritimes Regional Office Canadian Coast Guard Fisheries and Oceans Canada	902-426-6030 or 1-800-565-1633*
Nova Scotia	Maritimes Regional Office Canadian Coast Guard Fisheries and Oceans Canada	902-426-6030 or 1-800-565-1633*
New Brunswick	Maritimes Regional Office Canadian Coast Guard Fisheries and Oceans Canada	902-426-6030 or 1-800-565-1633*
Quebec	National Environmental Emergencies Centre Environment Canada	514-283-2333 or 1-866-283-2333*
Ontario	Spills Action Centre Ontario Ministry of the Environment	416-325-3000 or 1-800-268-6060*
Manitoba	Manitoba Department of Conservation	204-944-4888
Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment	1-800-667-7525
Alberta	Alberta Ministry of Environment	780-422-4505 or 1-800-222-6514*
British Columbia	Emergency Management British Columbia Ministry of Justice	1-800-663-3456
Yukon	Yukon Department of Environment	867-667-7244
Northwest Territories	Department of Environment and Natural Resources Government of the Northwest Territories	867-920-8130
Nunavut	Department of Environment and Natural Resources Government of the Northwest Territories	867-920-8130

*Telephone number accessible only within the respective province.

Who should be notified verbally under the *Release and Environmental Emergency Notification Regulations*?

Notify the applicable telephone number provided in the Notification Regulations. Applicable telephone numbers are provided on this page and can also be found at www.ec.gc.ca/ee-ue/default.asp?lang=En&n=EED2E58C-1.



What information needs to be included in the written report under section 40 of the *PCB Regulations*?

The PCB Online Reporting System allows owners to report releases to the environment. Online reports are automatically sent to the Environment Canada Regional Director of Enforcement. The PCB Online Reporting System website can be found at:

<https://srbpc-pcbrs.ec.gc.ca/Connexion-Login.aspx>

The contents of the release (i.e. spill) report should contain:

1. name, civic and mailing address, and telephone number of owner or person with management or control of the PCBs that are released;
2. date, time and location of the release;
3. description of the source of the release;
4. quantity of liquids or solids containing PCBs released, expressed in litres or kilograms, and the concentration of PCBs in the liquid or solid released, expressed in mg/kg.

For more information

PCB website: www.ec.gc.ca/bpc-pcb

Atlantic

Tel.: 902-426-8679

Email: PCB.ATL@ec.gc.ca

Quebec

Tel.: 514-283-1005

Email: lcpe.info.cepa-qc@ec.gc.ca

Ontario

Tel.: 1-800-668-6767

Email: EnviroInfo.Ontario@ec.gc.ca

Prairie and Northern

Tel.: 204-983-1906

Email:

PNRCompliancePromotion@ec.gc.ca

Pacific and Yukon

Tel.: 250-287-1866

Email: PCB.PYR@ec.gc.ca

This material has been prepared for convenience of reference only and does not have an official character. For the purpose of interpreting and applying the regulations, users must consult the regulations on Justice Canada's website at www.laws-lois.justice.gc.ca.

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